



FOR RELEASE  
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**STATEMENT OF U.S. SECRETARY OF EDUCATION ROD PAIGE  
REGARDING INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 1**

I congratulate the House Education and Workforce Committee and Chairman Boehner on the introduction of H.R. 1, a comprehensive bill that embodies President Bush's bold plans for reforming America's public elementary and secondary schools. The President's 'No Child Left Behind' plan is a call for systemic change, and I thank and applaud the members of the committee for the strong interest they have shown in pursuing that change and supporting education, President Bush's foremost priority.

H.R. 1 offers a plan of attack against the persistent and insidious achievement gap between our disadvantaged students and their more affluent peers by linking federal support for education to strong accountability for results. For too long, the federal government has funded programs without even looking at or asking about the results for our children. The time for change has come, and bold legislation such as H.R. 1 that incorporates high standards, annual measurement and accountability, including expanded parental choice, with increased support and flexibility for our state and local governments will help us usher in that change.

As a result of research and measurement, we know more than ever before about what works in our public schools and what does not. Legislation like H.R. 1 reflects the growing support in Washington, D.C., for systemic change that will emphasize what works and will make our public education system a system of achievement.

I look forward to working with the members of the committee as they begin discussions about H.R. 1, and thank them for their leadership on behalf of our children. Through meaningful discussion of the plans set forth in H.R. 1, we can make sure that no child in this country is left behind.

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